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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEW JERSEY WOMAN SENTENCED FOR ROLE IN
BRIBERY AND SCHEME TO DEFRAUD GIANT FOOD, INC.**

Greenbelt, Maryland - United States Attorney Thomas M. DiBiagio announced today that U.S. District Judge Deborah K. Chasanow sentenced Gina Miranda, age 37, of Brick, New Jersey, yesterday to 21 months imprisonment followed by 3 years supervised release following her guilty plea to wire fraud and using interstate wires to further a commercial bribery/kickback scheme involving a former employee of Giant Food, Inc. of Landover, Maryland ("Giant"). Judge Chasanow also ordered Miranda to pay \$60,000 to compensate the court for the cost of her court-appointed lawyers.

According to the statement of facts presented to the court when Miranda pleaded guilty, Miranda and a Delaware corporation she controlled, Gem Enterprises, Inc. ("GEM"), engaged in a scheme to defraud Giant as part of an illegal arrangement with former Giant employee John Patrick Burns. Burns was employed as a senior diverter buyer and assigned to make purchases and sales in the "diverter" market for surplus inventories. When Giant possessed excess non-perishable

product which it did not wish to store, Burns was responsible for selling the product in the “secondary market” to “diverters,” such as Miranda and GEM, who then often sold the product to other retail food chains and stores. Burns was instructed to maximize Giant’s profits on diverter transactions and was prohibited by Giant’s corporate policies from accepting bribes and kickbacks.

As set forth in the statement of facts, between 1992 and September 2000, Miranda and GEM paid commercial bribes and kickbacks to Burns who provided to them preferential treatment. In 1992 Burns created two corporate entities located at Burns’s residence to provide a separate business entity, name and bank account for receiving bribes and kickbacks from Miranda and GEM. Between 1995 and 2000, Miranda and GEM paid Burns through those entities approximately \$523,230 in the form of wire transfers from Miranda’s bank in New Jersey to Burns’s bank in Maryland. The transactions violated the federal wire fraud statute and also constituted illegal use of interstate wires to commit a violation of the New Jersey commercial bribery statute.

Burns pleaded guilty in March 2002 and is awaiting sentencing by U.S. District Judge Peter J. Messitte.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Annapolis Resident Agency and the U.S. Attorney’s office in Greenbelt, and is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Stuart A. Berman and James G. Warwick.